HINJU!?

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE HEARD THAT NAME!
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO, GYRUS.

IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE ALL OF YOU!

ALTHOUGH I WISH THE CIRCUMSTANCES WERE BETTER FOR YOU, MARIA.

ARE YOU KIDDING? YOUR TIMING WAS PERFECT. I DOUBT MY CIRCUITS WOULD HAVE SURVIVED A LAVA BATH IF YOU HADN'T BEEN THERE.

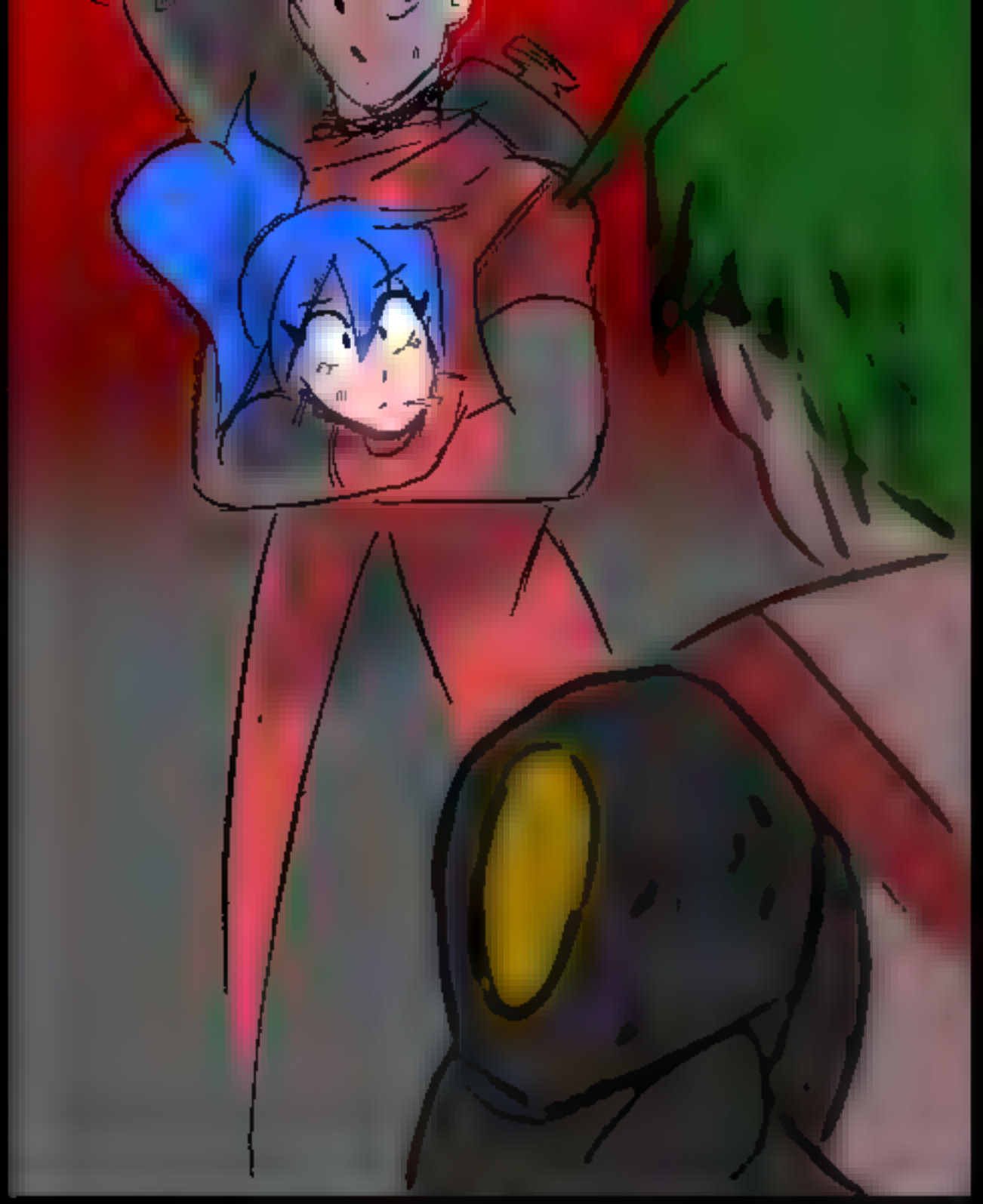
WHAT SORCERY IS AT PLAY NOW?

MARIA, THY HEAD HAS BEEN SEVERED AND YET YE LIVE?

AND HOW DID *HE* GET HERE? WHERE ARE SYLVIA, RAGAN, ANAN AND FEATHER?

AH, YOU MUST HAVE MET MY BROTHERS...

I'M SERDTSE, PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS HINJU, THE HEART CHAKRA CLONE.
YOU SURVIVED?



BUT...
HOW?!

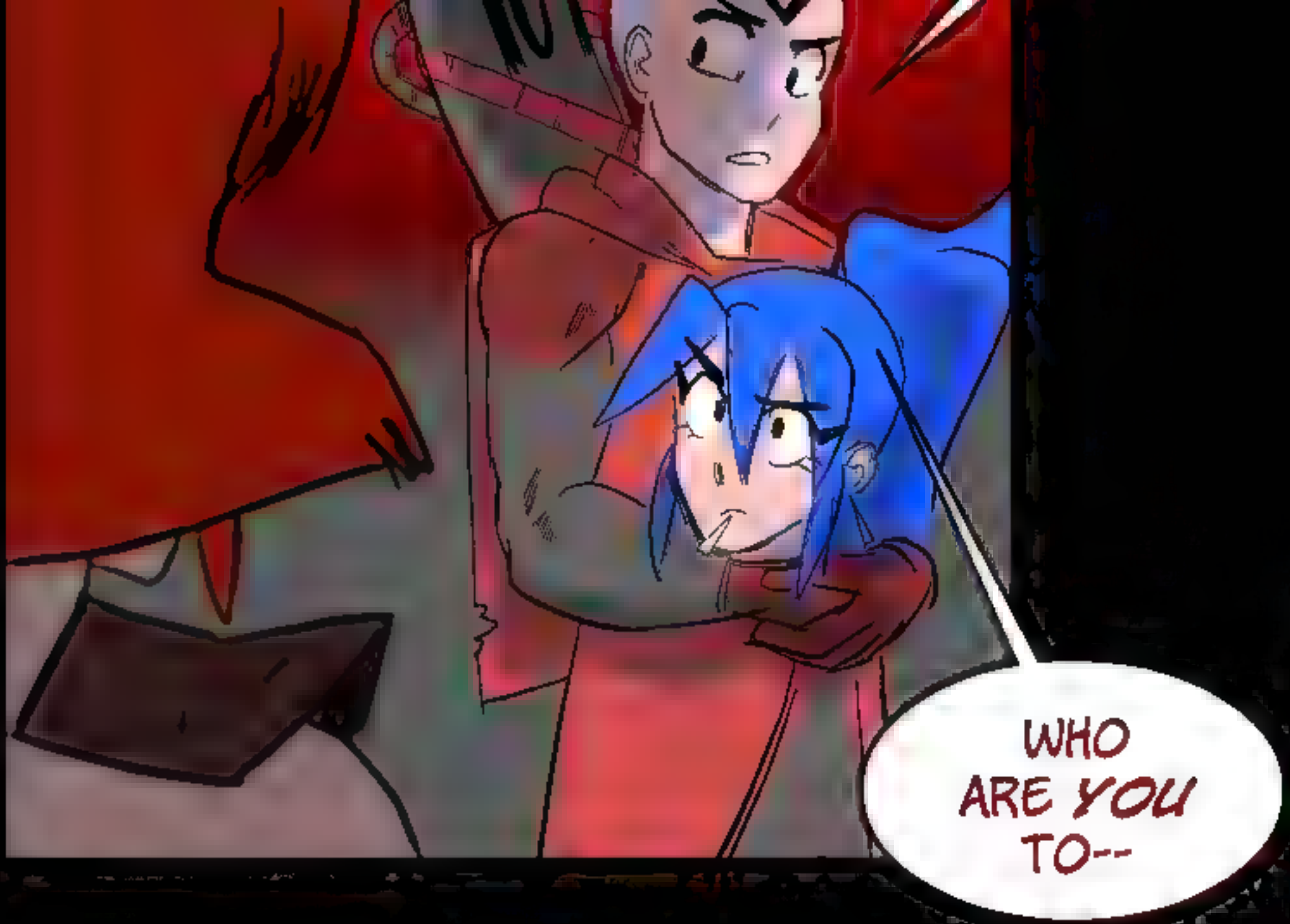
OH, I SEE... SHORT HAIR.
YOU MUST NOT HAVE COMPLETED THE BLACK BOX YET.

DON'T WORRY, IT'LL MAKE SENSE SOON.

DO NOT BE DECEIVED...

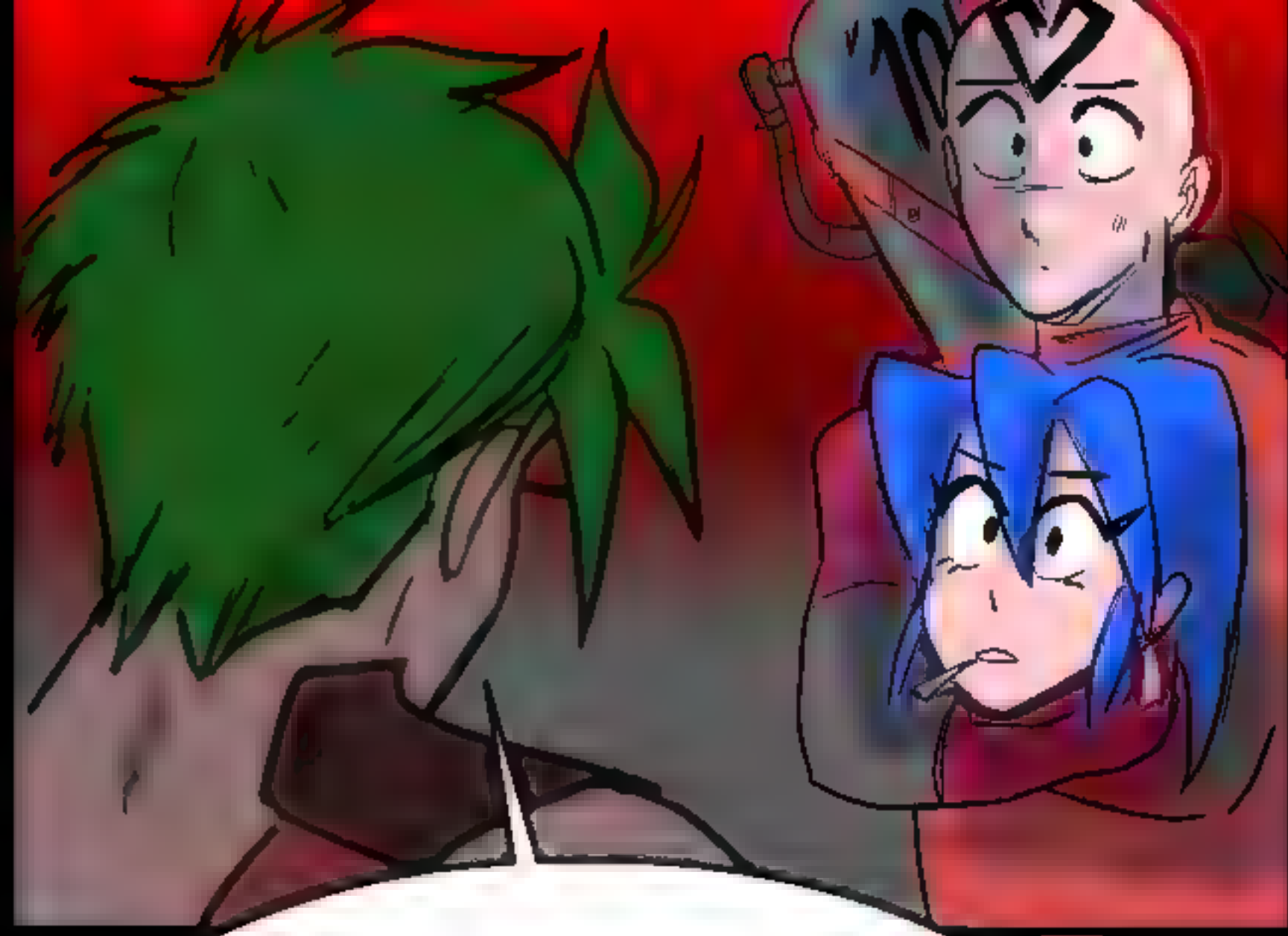
IF THIS MAN SEEMS DIFFERENT THAN THE GYRUS YE KNEW, IT IS BECAUSE HE IS AN IMPOSTER.

EXCUSE ME?


WHO ARE YOU TO--

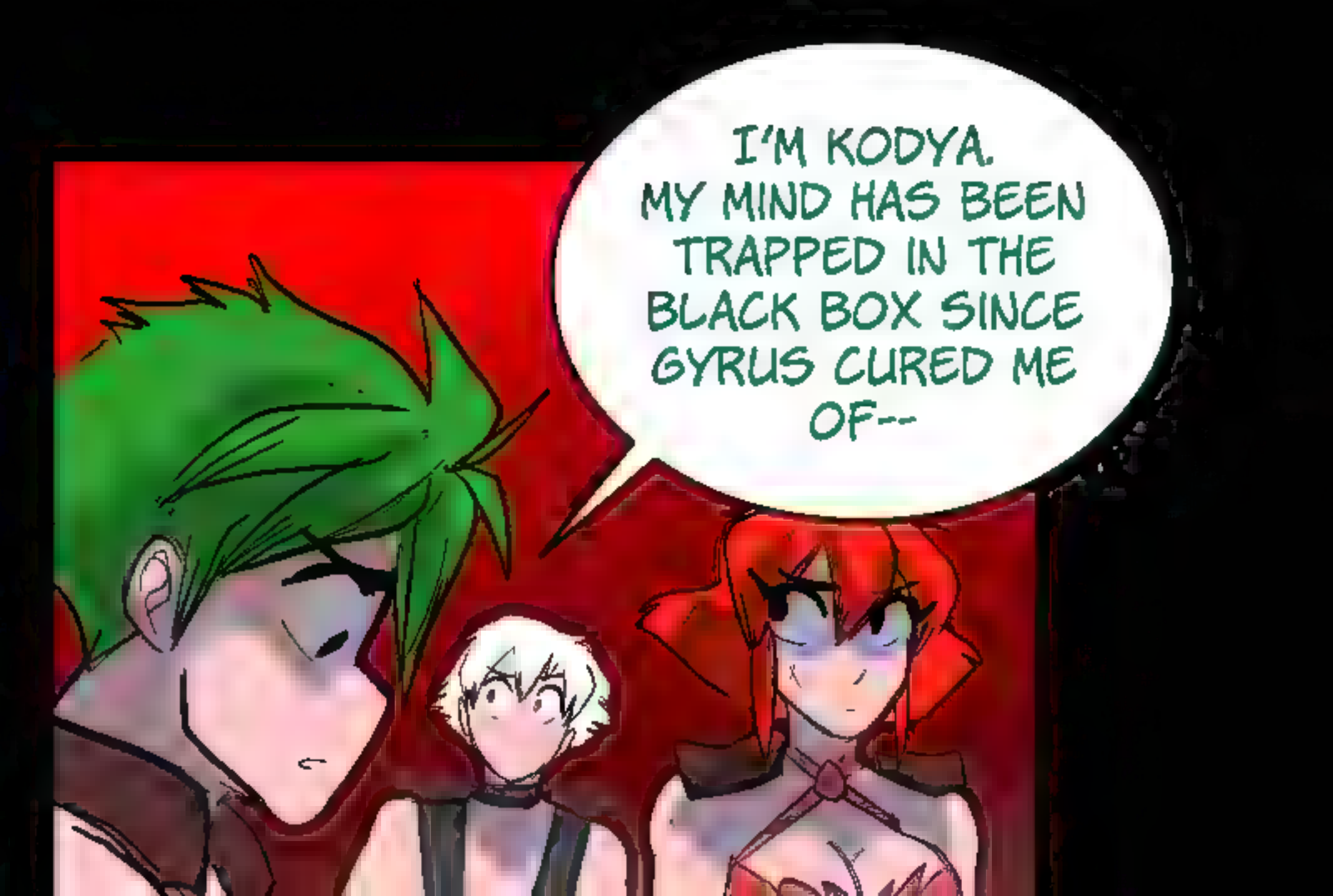
SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH!

I PROMISED GYRUS THAT I WOULD STAND IN FOR HIM UNTIL HE RECLAIMED THE BLACK BOX.



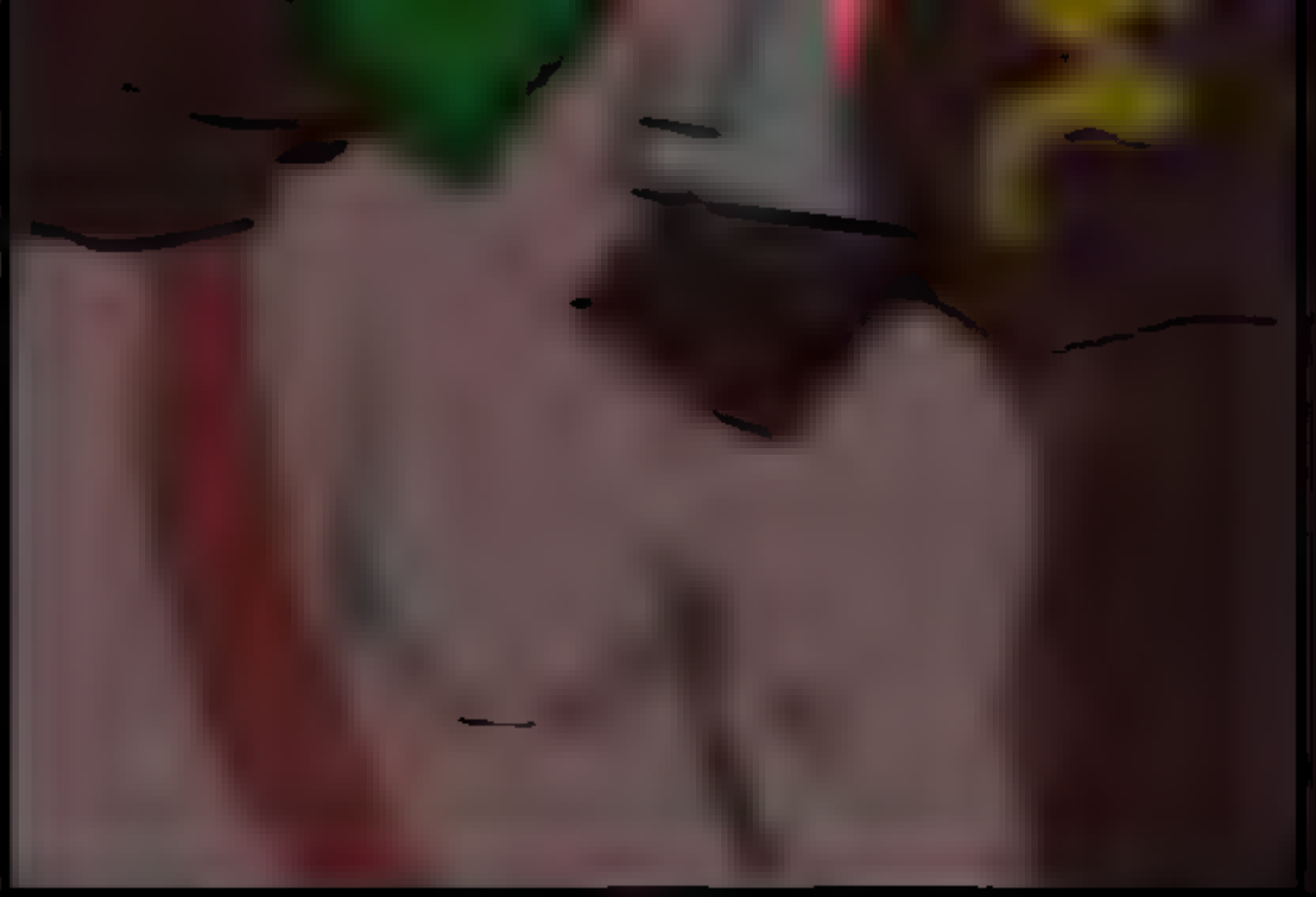
HE SAID
IT WOULD JUST
BE A FEW DAYS, BUT IT'S
BEEN ALMOST 2 WEEKS. I EVEN
CUT MY HAIR SO I COULD BE
SURE TO NOTICE WHEN IT
STARTED GROWING LIKE HE
SAID IT WOULD.

THEN...
WHO ARE YOU?

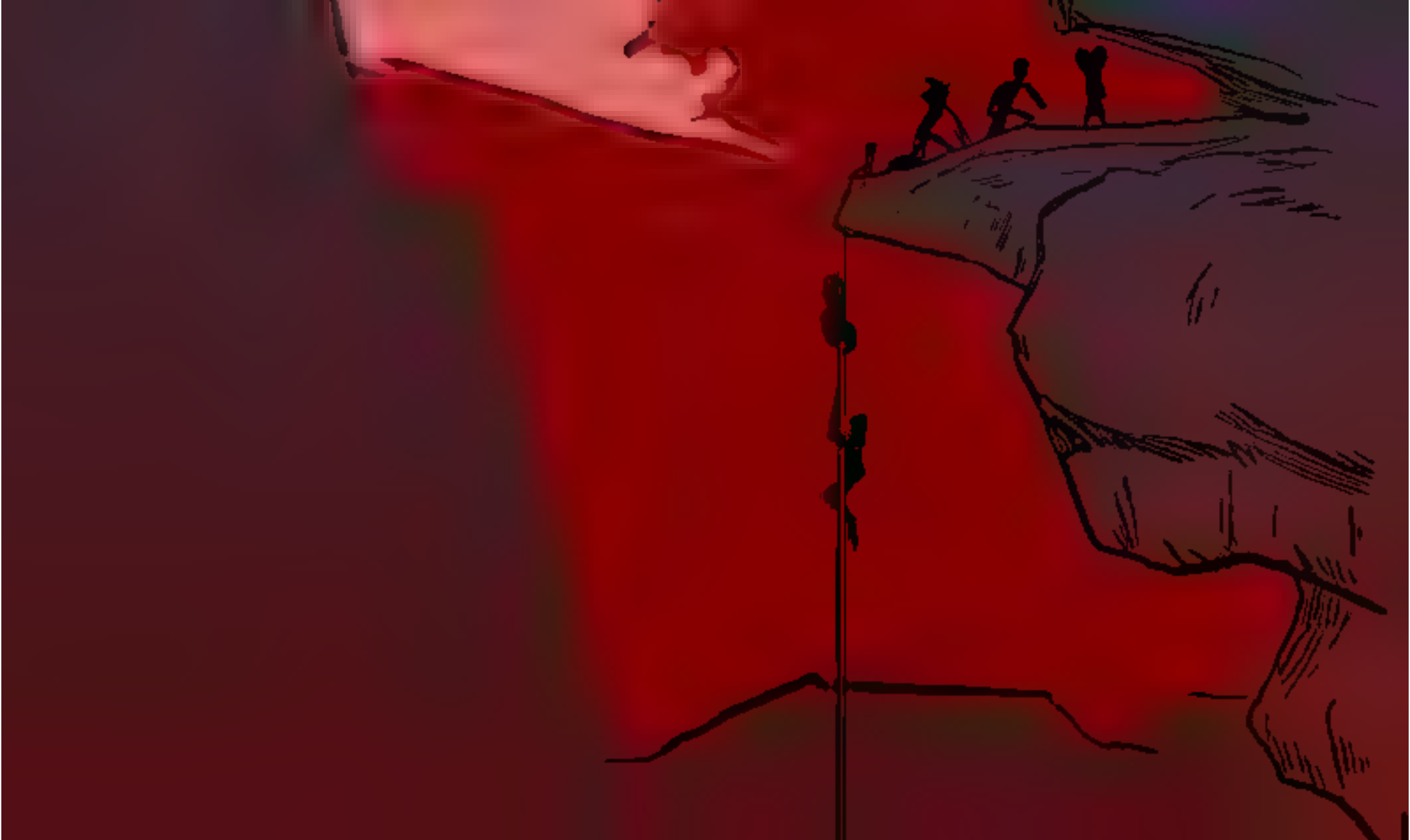

I'M KODYA.
MY MIND HAS BEEN TRAPPED IN THE BLACK BOX SINCE GYRUS CURED ME OF--

SORRY TO INTERRUPT. IT SOUNDS LIKE WE HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT...
BUT NOT HERE.

MY PLACE ISN'T FAR... WE'LL HAVE MORE PRIVACY THERE.

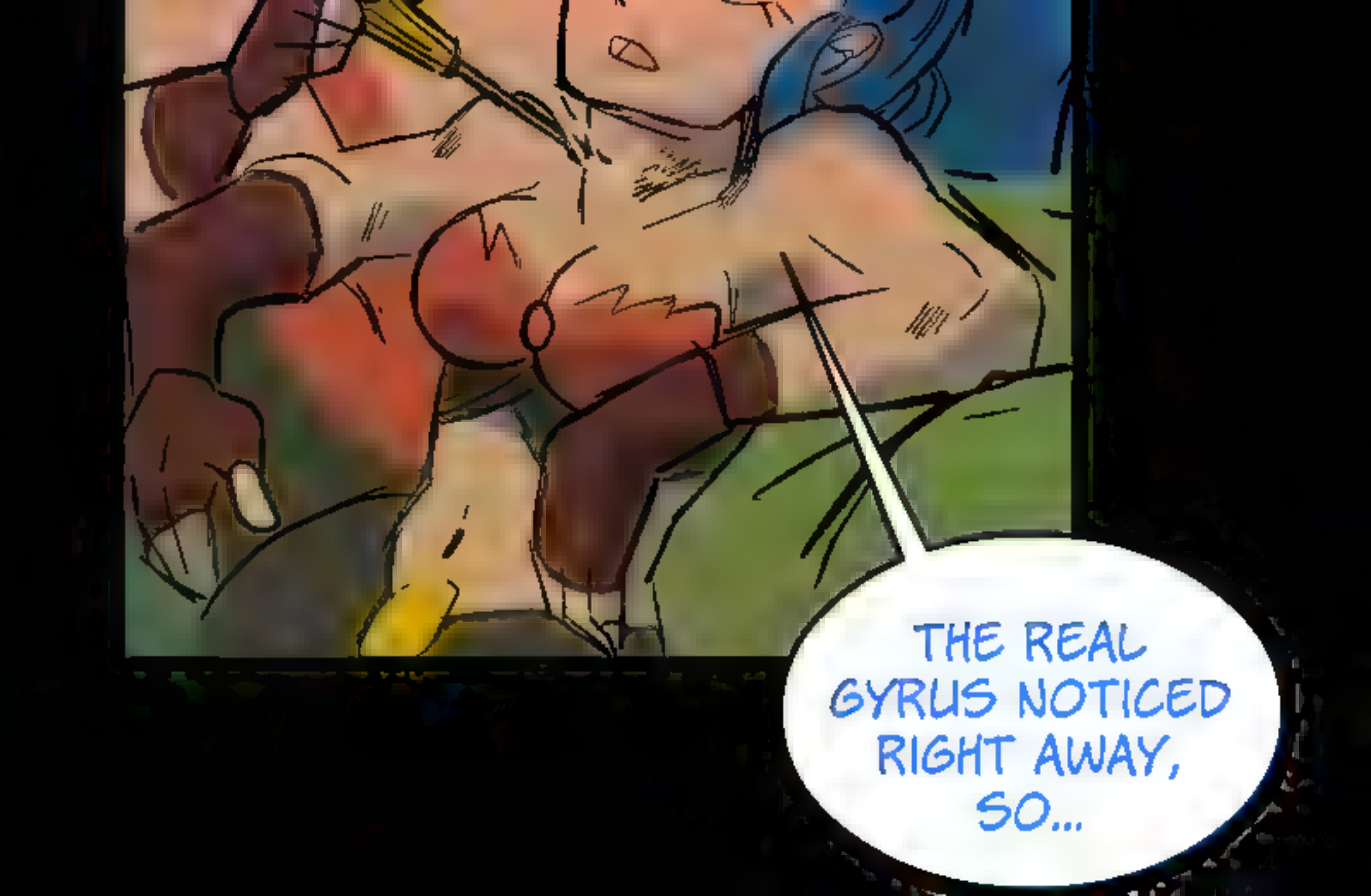


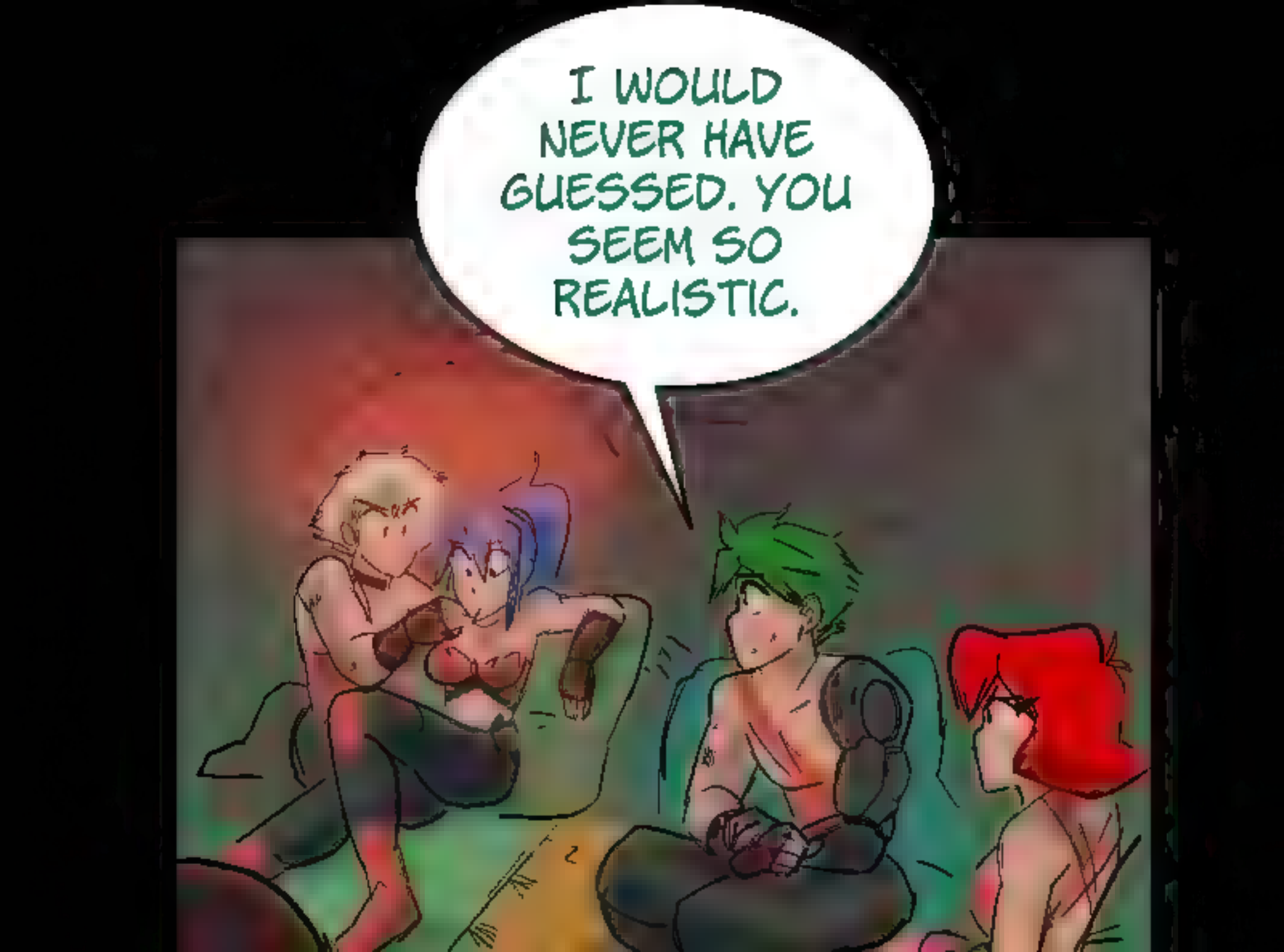
STORY/ART: TOONIMATED
CHAPTER 111
"INTO THE FRYING PAN PT. 1"

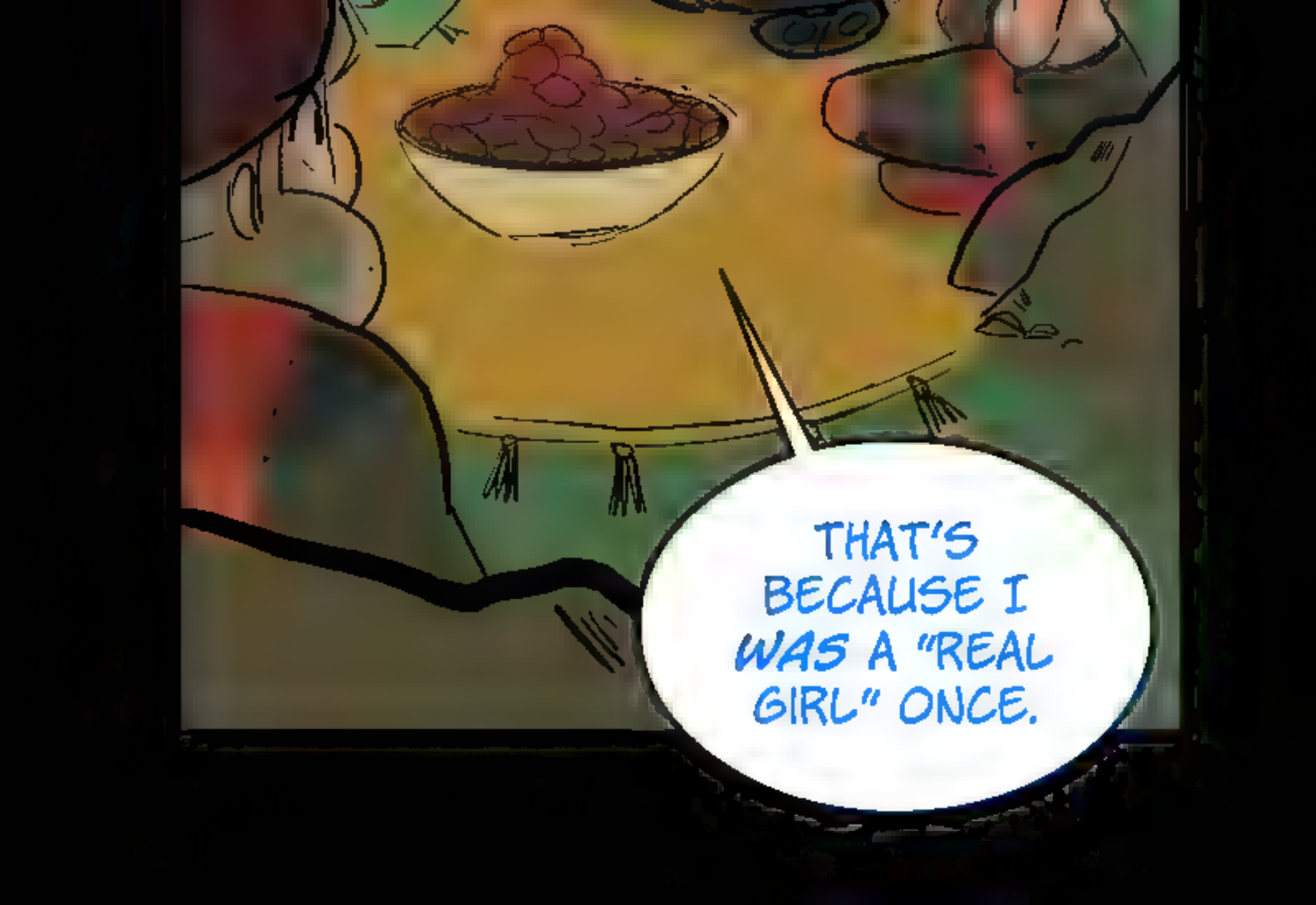


SO YOU'RE A... "ROBOT"?

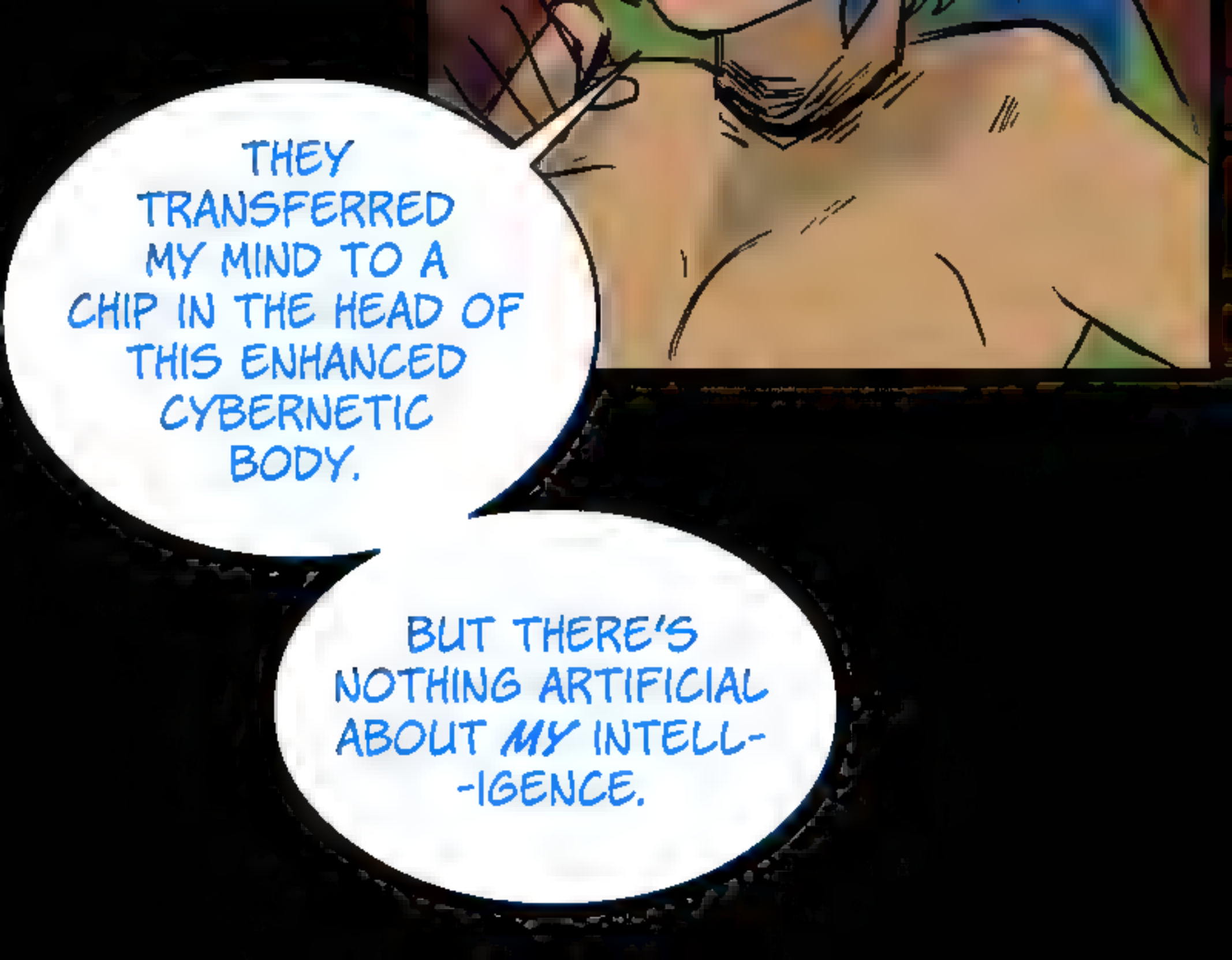
YEP,
SORRY I NEVER
MENTIONED IT...


THE REAL GYRUS NOTICED RIGHT AWAY, SO...


I WOULD NEVER HAVE GUESSED. YOU SEEM SO REALISTIC.


THAT'S BECAUSE I WAS A "REAL GIRL" ONCE.

THEN WORLD WAR 3 CAME ALONG AND, WELL...


THEY TRANSFERRED MY MIND TO A CHIP IN THE HEAD OF THIS ENHANCED CYBERNETIC BODY.
BUT THERE'S NOTHING ARTIFICIAL ABOUT *MY* INTELL--IGENCE.

UNLIKE KNOX, HERE...
TSSS

OUCH!!
CAREFUL WHERE YOU'RE ZAPPING!

APOLOGIES.

PERHAPS I REQUIRE AN UPDATE.
HEH, SMART ASS...

I'VE TAUGHT YOU TOO WELL.

TAK

TAK

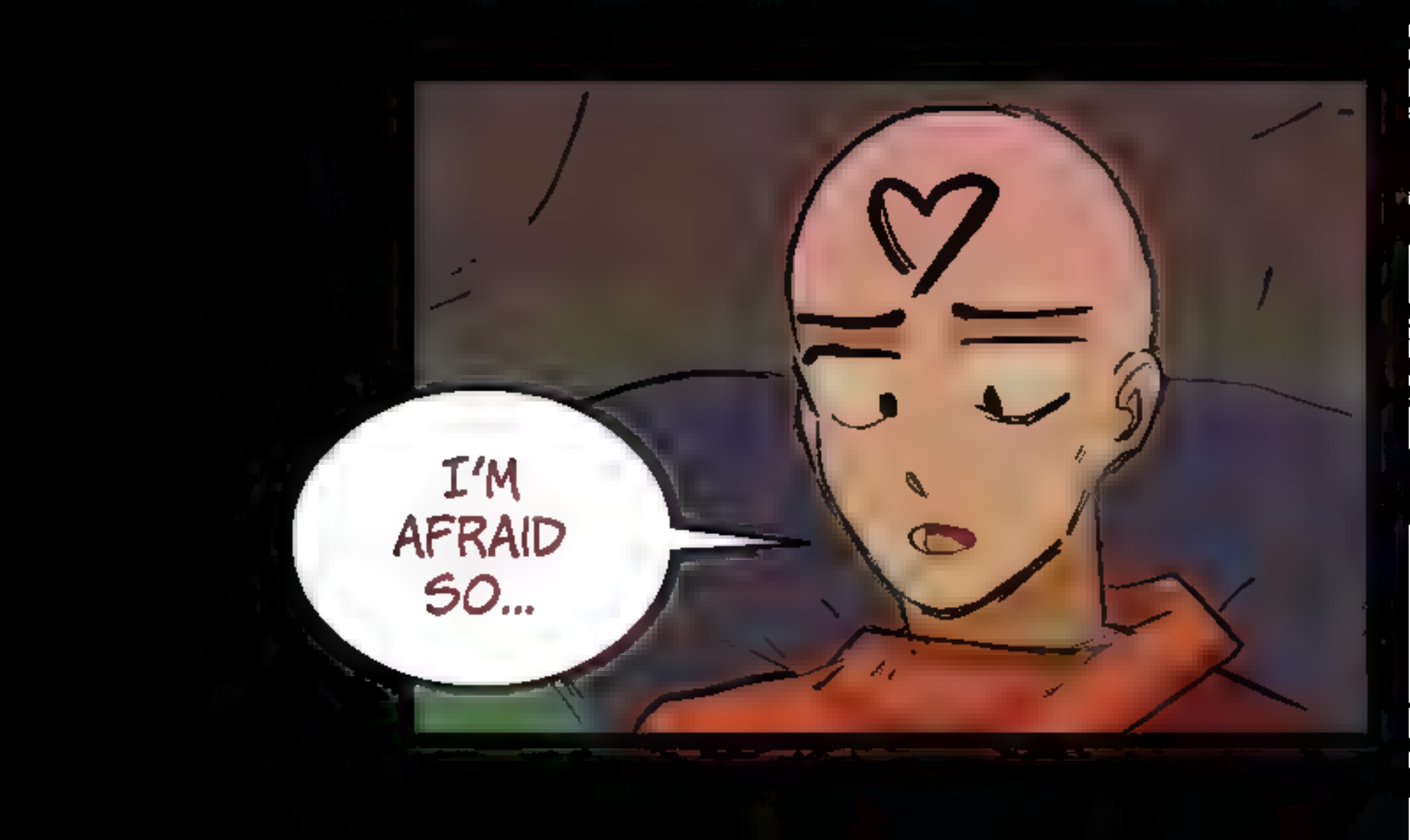
TAK

SORRY
TO KEEP YOU
WAITING.

I WANTED TO MAKE SURE WE WERE NOT FOLLOWED.
SIT

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO BE PARANOID, SERDTSE.

IS SOMETHING WRONG?


I'M AFRAID SO...

THINGS
HAVE BEEN
CHANGING
RECENTLY...

...LITERALLY.
GLU
GLU

AT FIRST IT WAS SO SUBTLE THAT I THOUGHT IT WAS MY IMAGINATION.

BUT OVERTIME,
THE CHANGES BECAME
MORE PRONOUNCED.

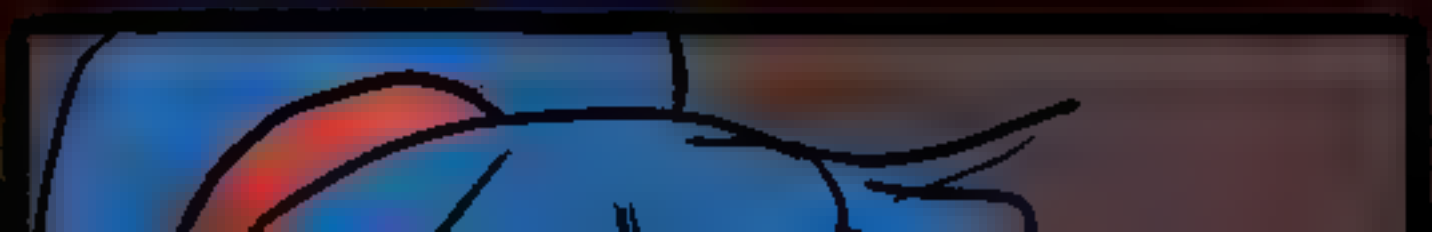
ONE SECOND I'M POURING A GLASS OF WATER, AND THE NEXT, IT BECOMES A JAR OF POISON IN MY HANDS.

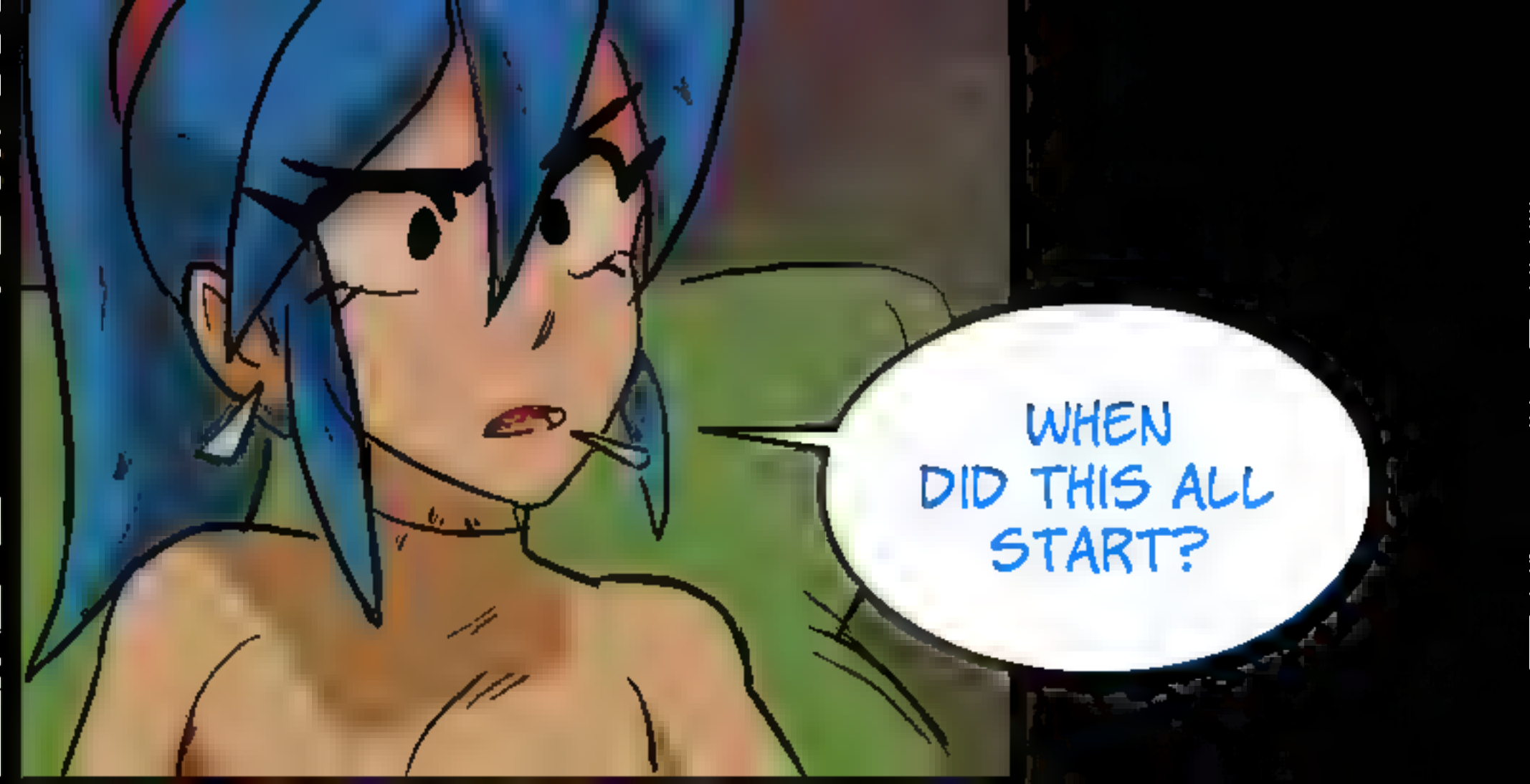
THAT KIND OF THING...

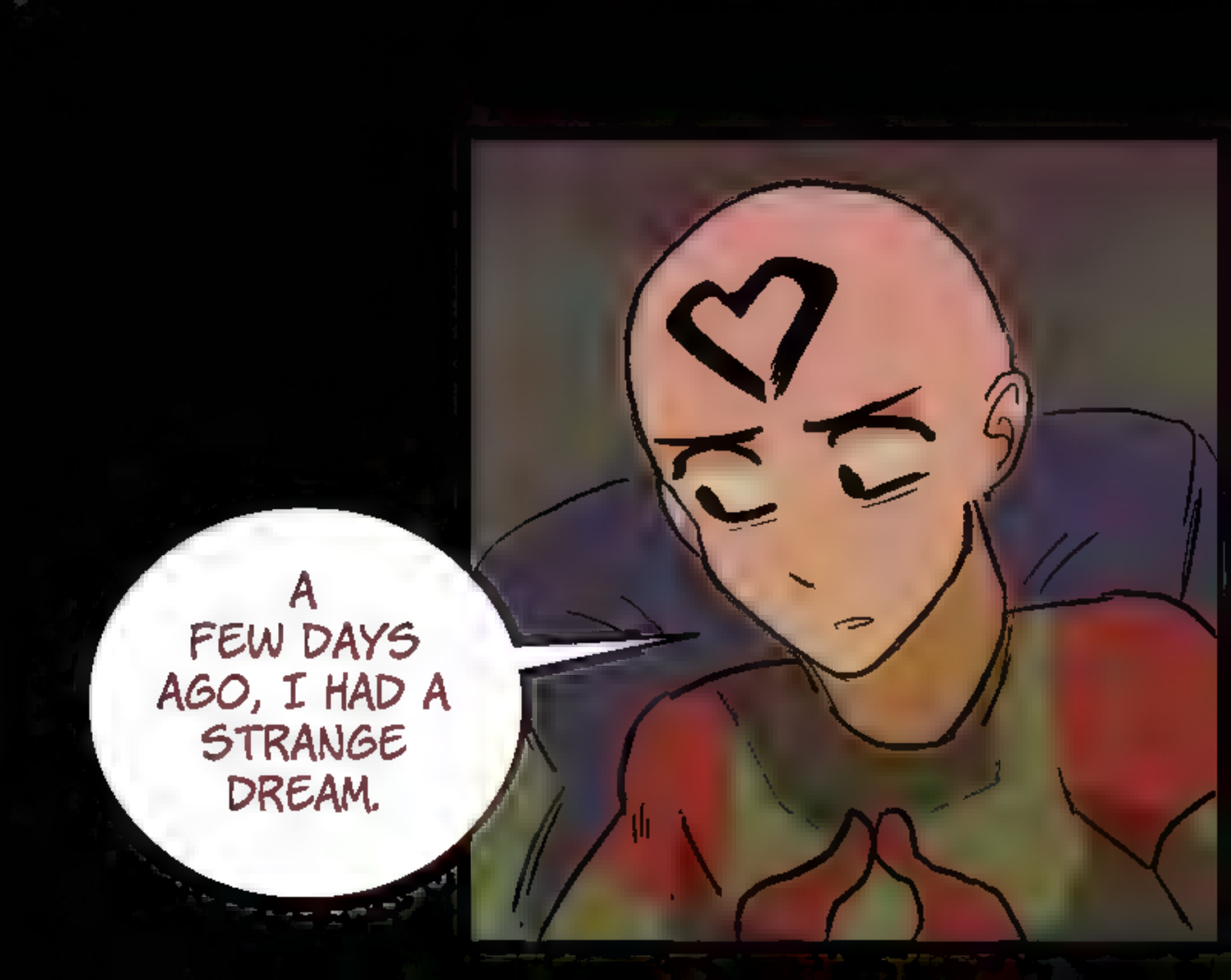
THEN A DRAGON LAID HER EGG IN THE RIVER AND MY HOUSE BOAT WAS TRAPPED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWO YEARS.

I DIDN'T BELIEVE IT WAS A COINCEDENCE. I PACKED EVERYTHING I COULD CARRY AND SET UP CAMP IN THIS CAVE INSTEAD.

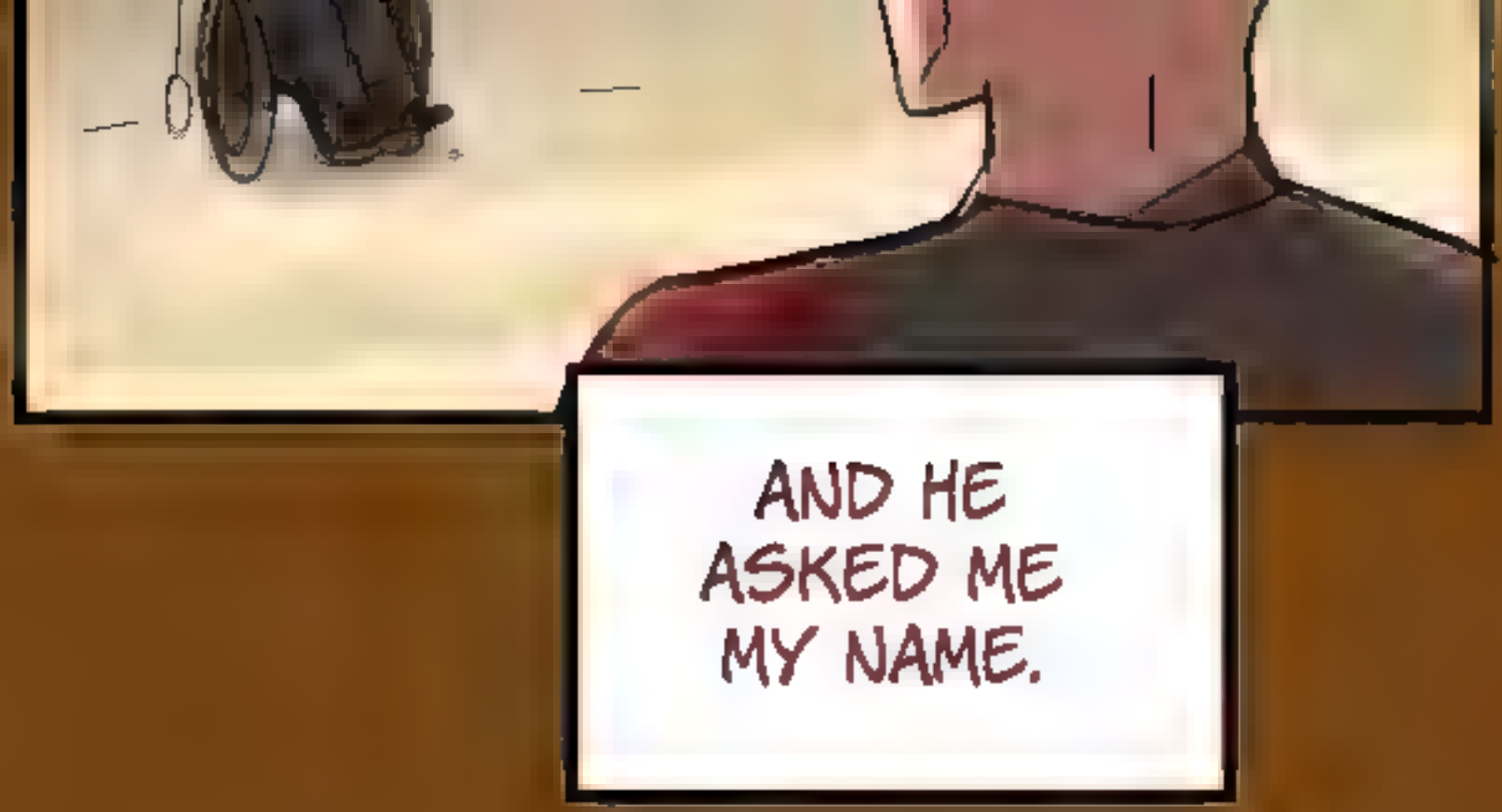
BY THE TIME I WENT BACK FOR A SECOND LOAD, MY CABIN WAS ALREADY GONE.




WHEN DID THIS ALL START?


A FEW DAYS AGO, I HAD A STRANGE DREAM.

DON APPEARED TO ME... HE WAS IN A WHEELCHAIR.


AND HE
ASKED ME
MY NAME.

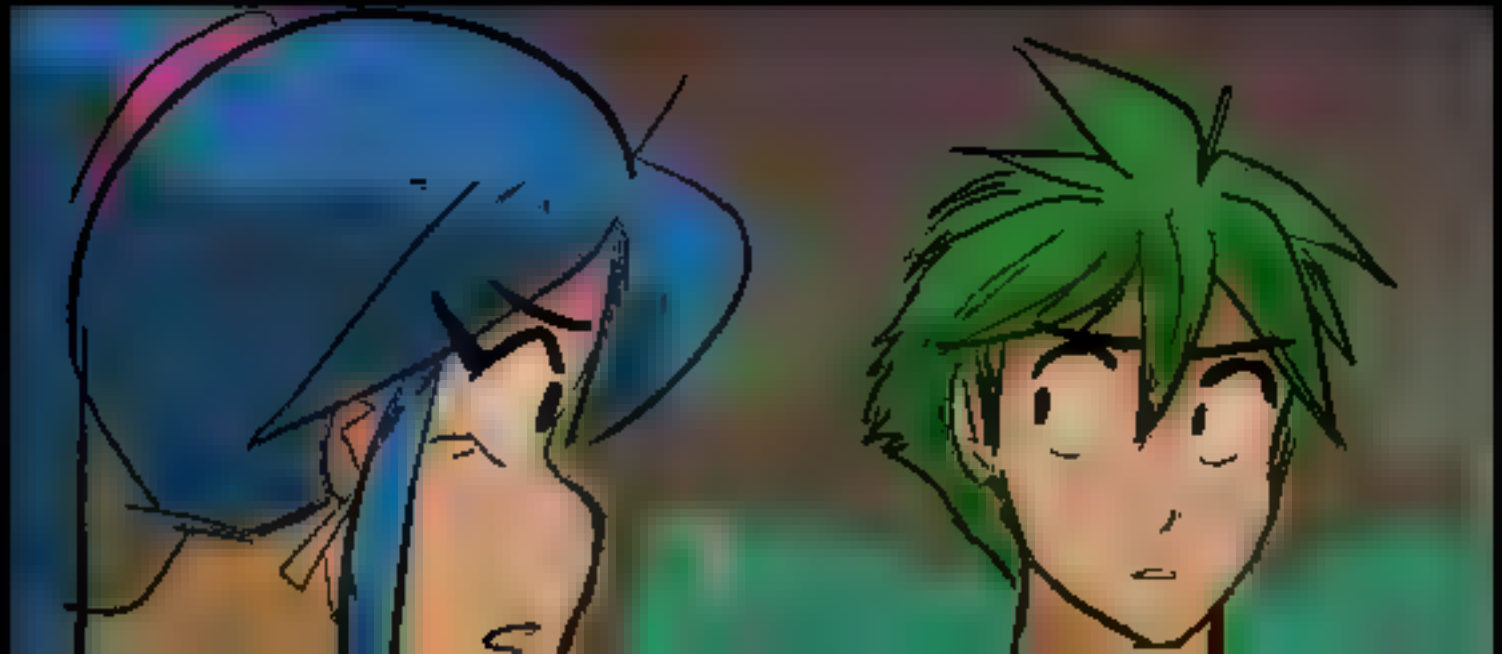
AS SOON AS I ANSWERED, I WOKE UP WITH AN OVERWHELMING SENSE OF DREAD.

SHORTLY BEFORE HE DIED, GYRUS SAID DON HAD USED SOMEONE'S POWER TO SPEAK TO HIM IN A DREAM.

YES,
I REMEMBER
NOW.

THAT MUST BE YUMEJI.

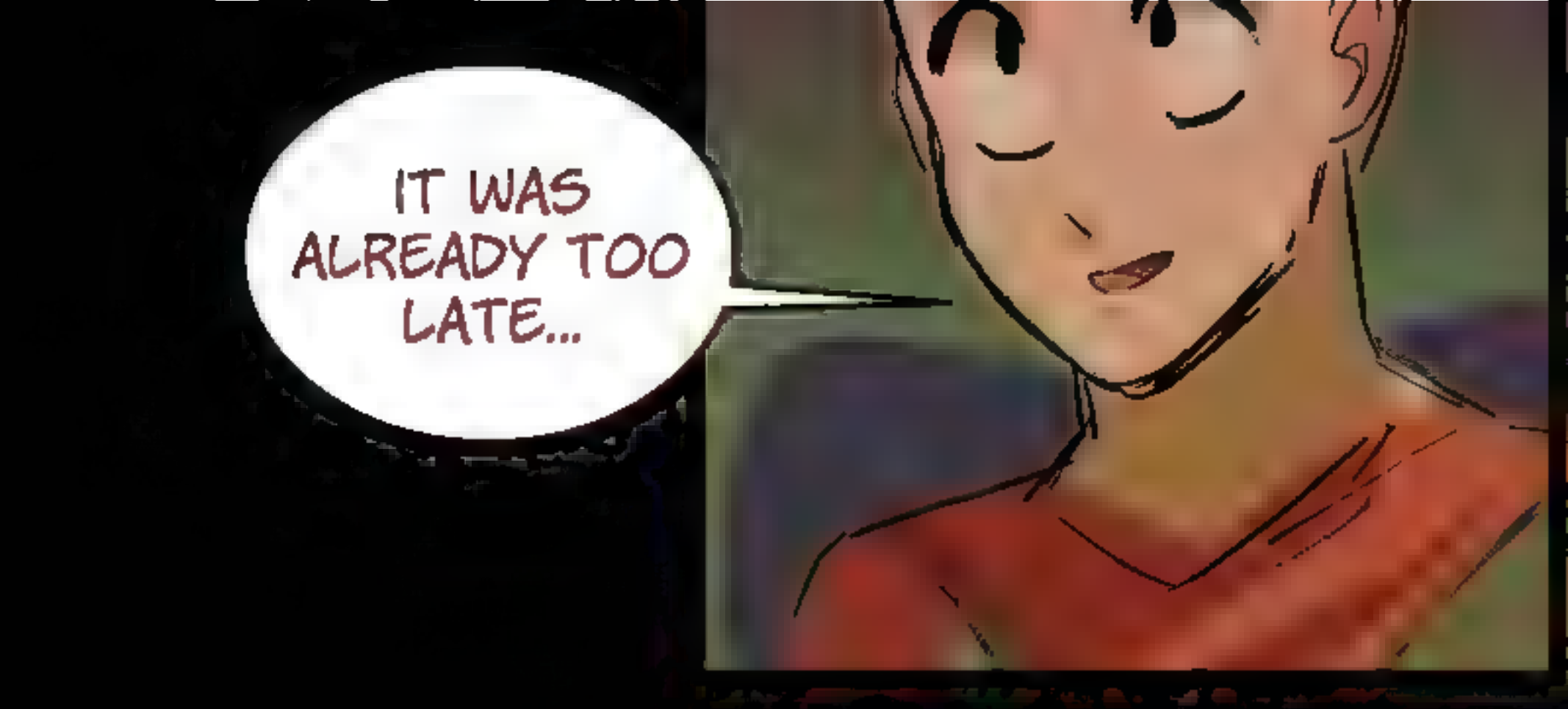
HE HAS
THE POWER TO
CONNECT PEOPLE'S
DREAMS.

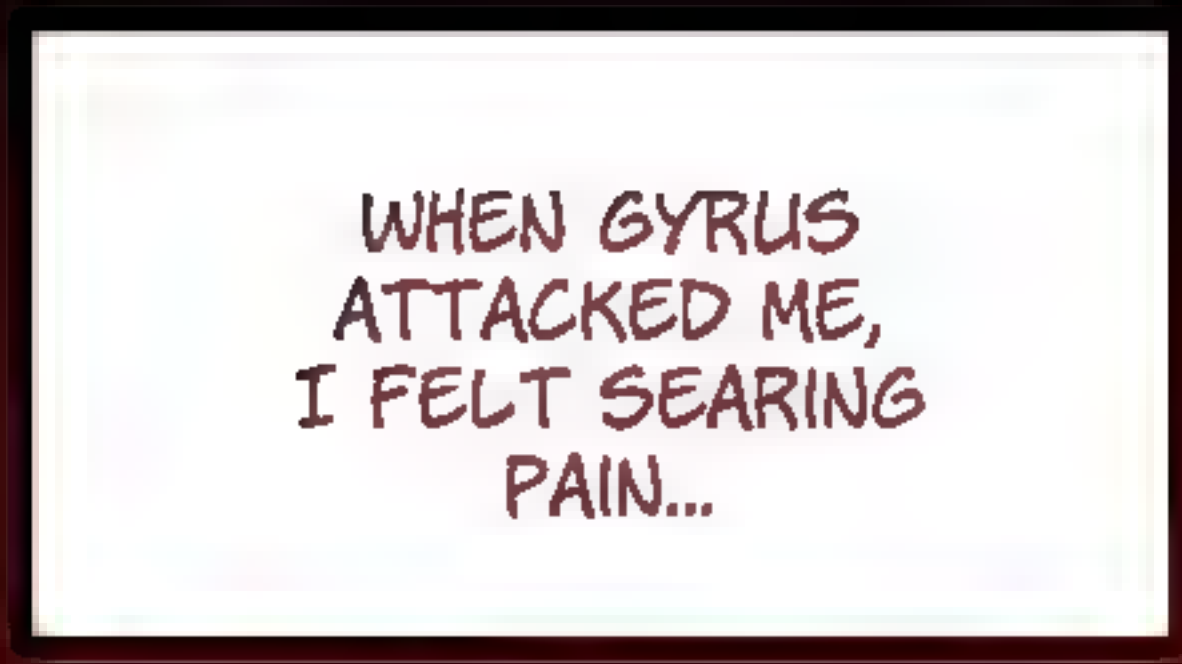


THAT MUST BE THE BASTARD!

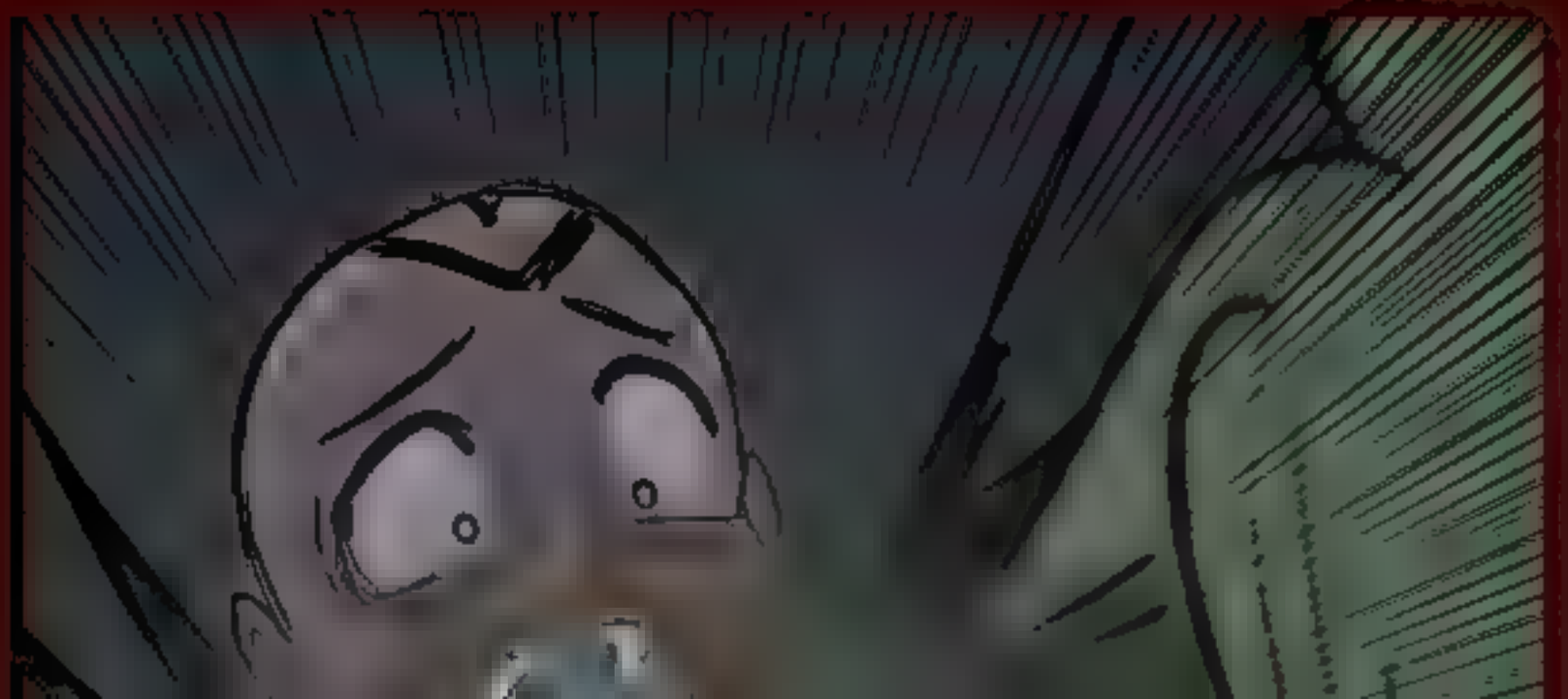
APPARENTLY DON FOUND THIS GUY AFTER GYRUS WAS FORCED TO LEAVE FOR KILLING HINJU... SO NEITHER SERDTSE OR GYRUS HAD MET HIM BEFORE.

BUT IF YOU WERE ALIVE, WHY DIDN'T YOU AND GYRUS JUST RETURN TO THE ROOM OF SWORDS?

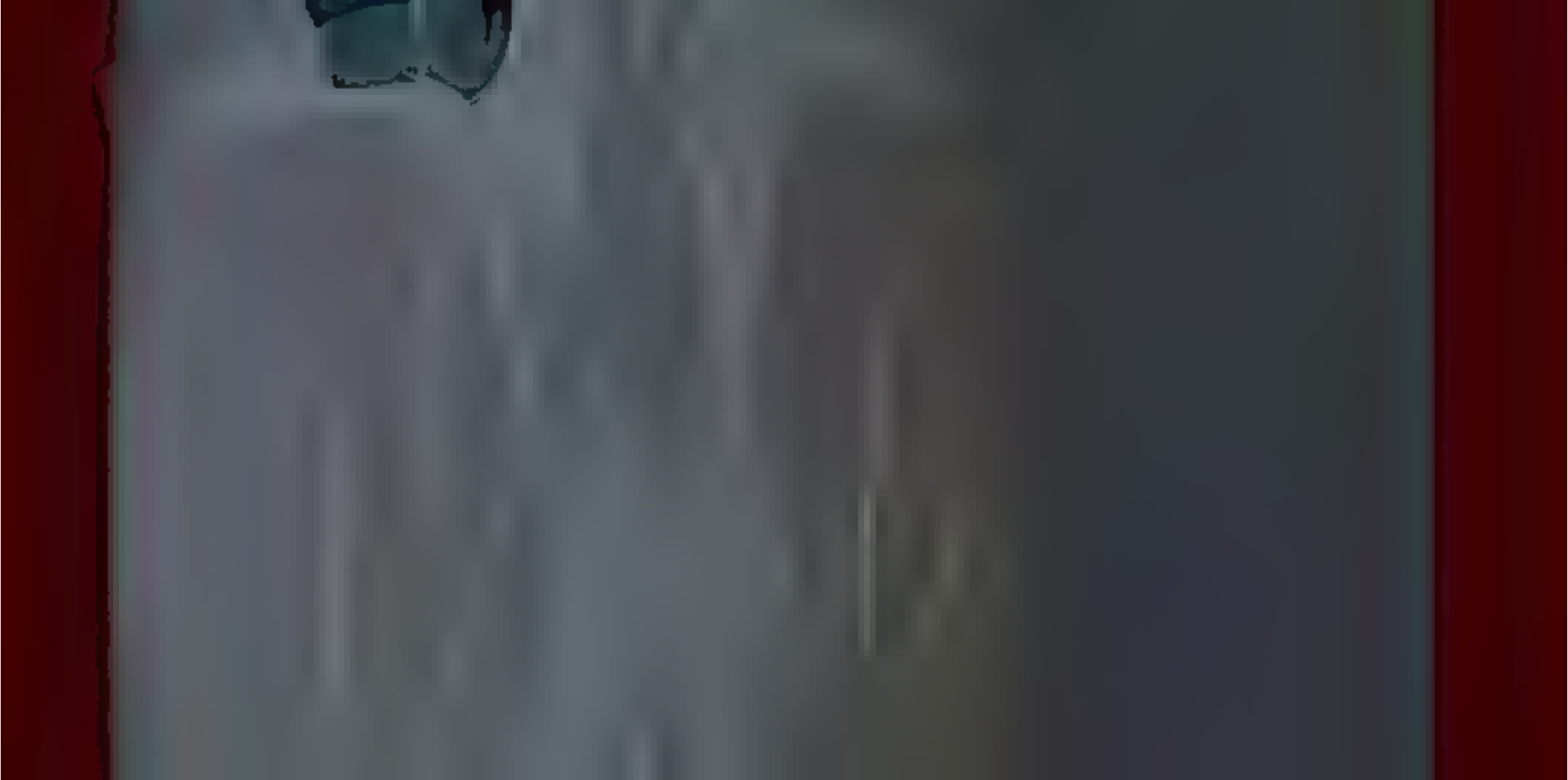

IT WAS ALREADY TOO LATE...

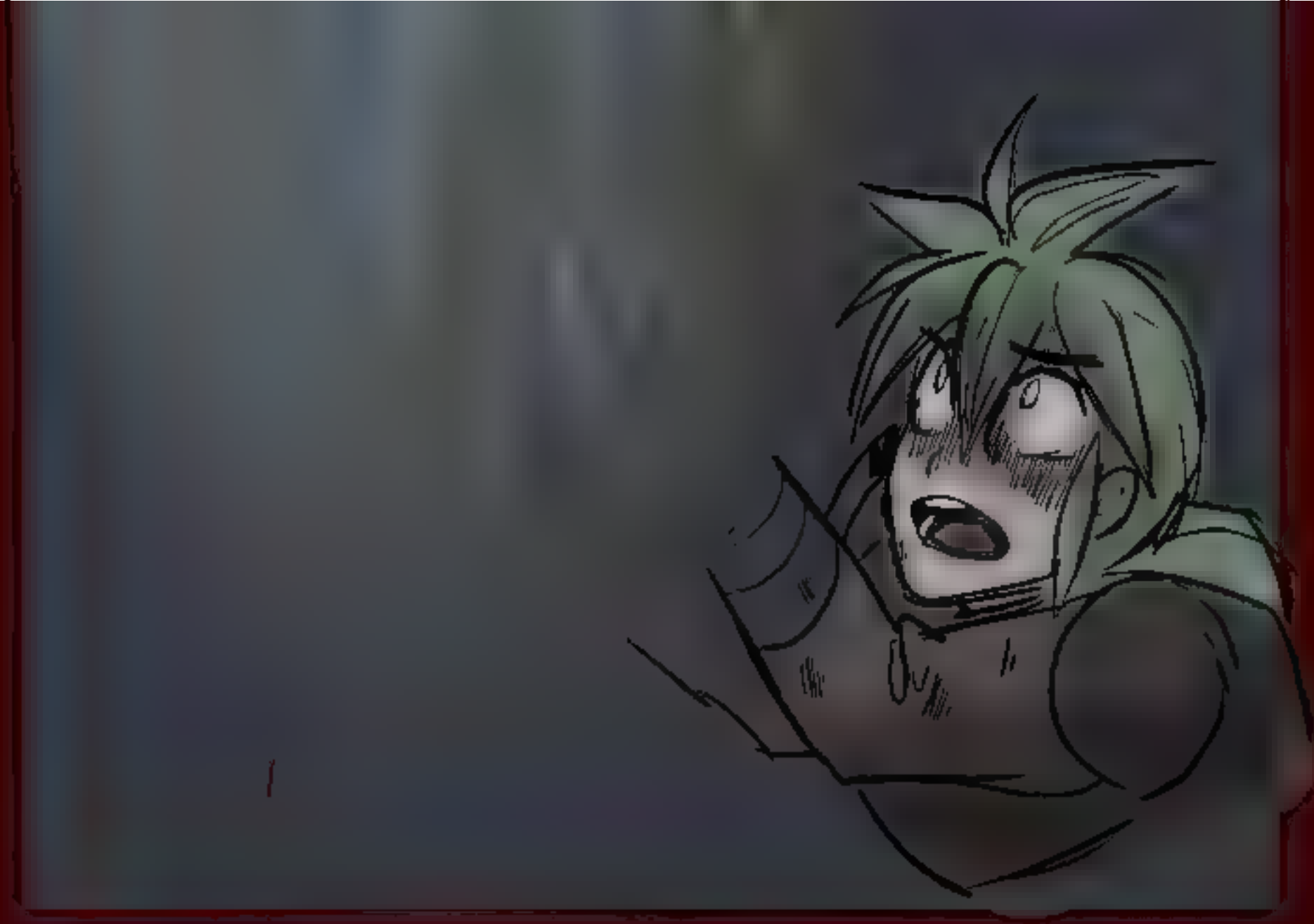

WHEN GYRUS ATTACKED ME, I FELT SEARING PAIN...

SWOOSH



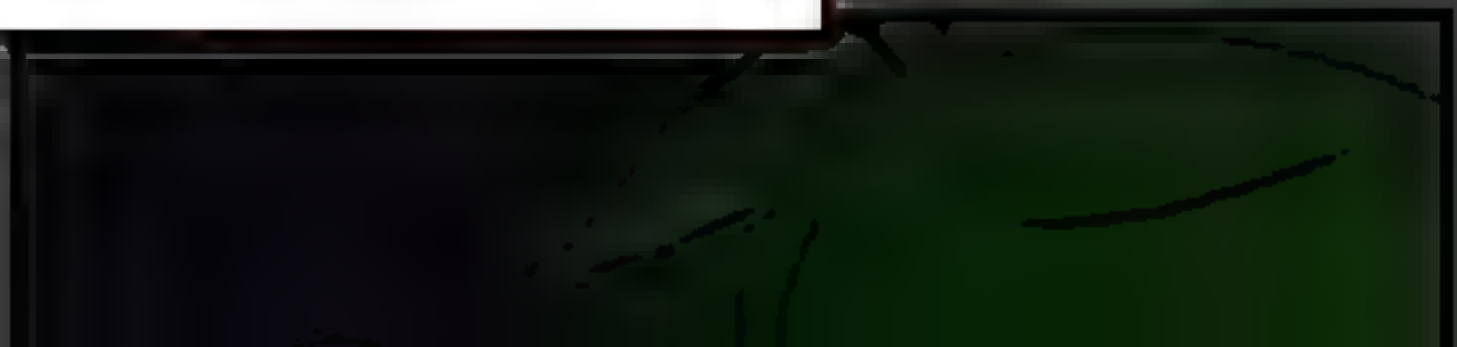
AAAAH!!!





AND THEN
NOTHING...

THE NEXT THING I KNEW, GYRUS WAS HOVERING OVER ME...



HE LOOKED EXHAUSTED. BURN MARKS COVERED HIS BODY...
HUFF...
HUFF..
HUFF..

HUFF...

HE APOLOGIZED FOR HURTING ME, AND EXPLAINED THAT HE'D MEANT TO CAPTURE DON...

HE EXPLAINED
WHAT HE HAD LEARNED
FROM THE SHADOWS
AND DESCRIBED DON'S
ATTEMPT TO
KILL HIM.

WE WERE IN AN UNFAMILIAR REALM. HE SAID WE'D PASSED THROUGH A PLACE HE CALLED "THE BLACK BOX".

HE WARNED ME THAT RETURNING TO THE ROOM OF SWORDS WOULD PUT US IN DON'S CROSSHAIRS.

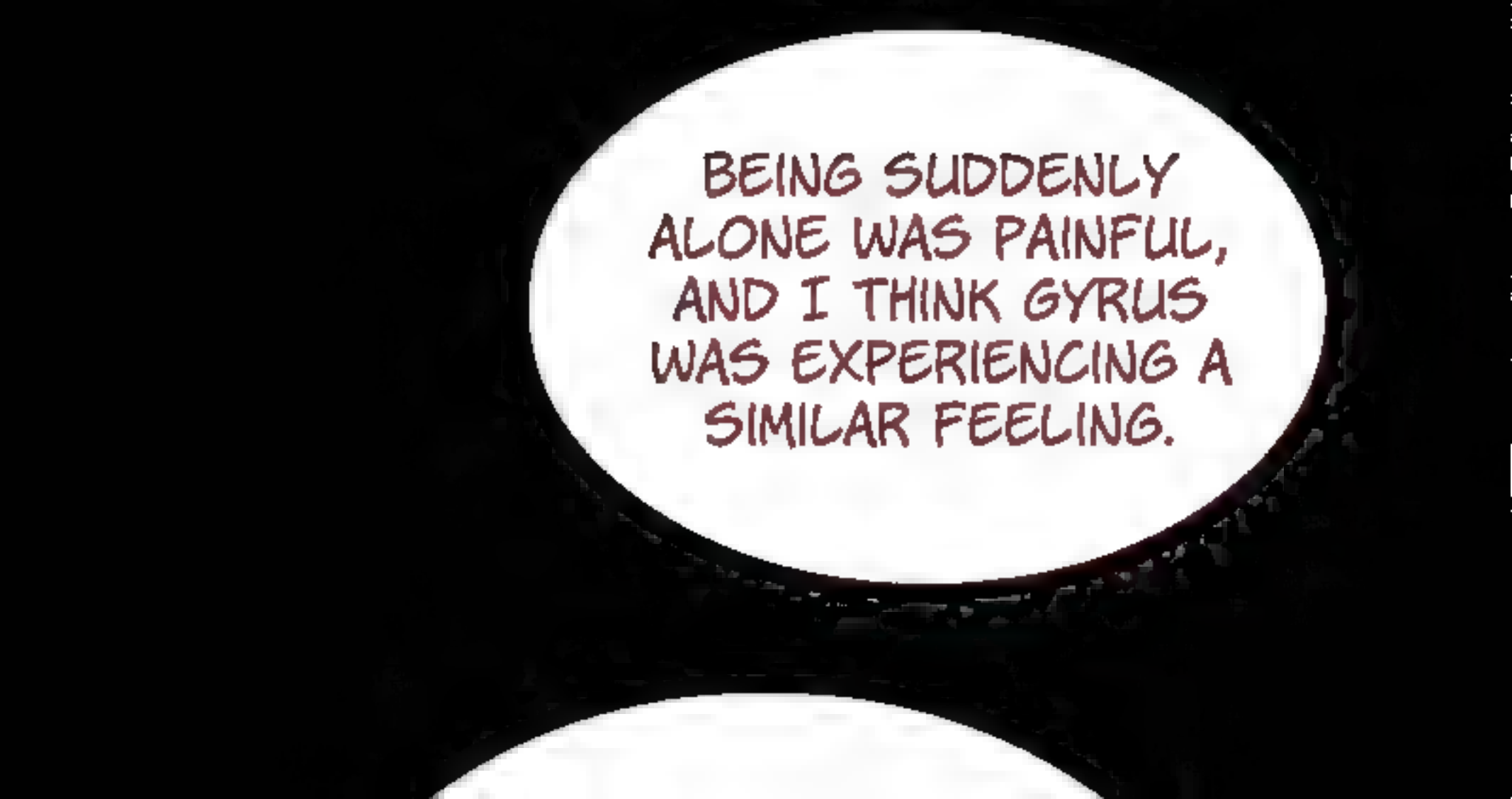
HE BEGGED ME NOT TO RETURN, NOT TO PUT OTHERS IN DANGER, BUT TO INSTEAD COME WITH HIM.

THE
LOOK IN HIS EYES
TOLD ME I HAD NO
CHOICE.

WITH
ALASTAIR'S HELP,
WE CHANGED
MY NAME.

DON IS POWERFUL BUT HE CAN ONLY MANIPULATE INFORMATION THAT HE KNOWS OF.
SO THAT'S WHY YOU'VE BEEN USING A FAKE NAME... TO ELUDE DON.

YES, EXACTLY.
IT WAS HARD FOR ME TO ACCEPT AT FIRST... AS A CHAKRA CLONE, SO MUCH OF MY IDENTITY CAME FROM BEING CONNECTED TO A GREATER WHOLE.


BEING SUDDENLY ALONE WAS PAINFUL, AND I THINK GYRUS WAS EXPERIENCING A SIMILAR FEELING.

HE SUGGESTED THE NAME "SERDTSE" WHICH IS THE RUSSIAN WORD FOR "HEART", AS YOU MUST KNOW. I COULD TELL IT HAD SENTIMENTAL VALUE TO HIM, AND MAYBE THAT'S WHAT HELPED IT FEEL A LITTLE LESS EMPTY TO ME.

WELL HE KNOWS MY NAME... WHY HAS HE DONE NOTHING TO ME?

WHY DO YOU THINK THOSE SQUIDS SHOWED UP THE MOMENT YOU CALLED HIM FROM THE SHIP?

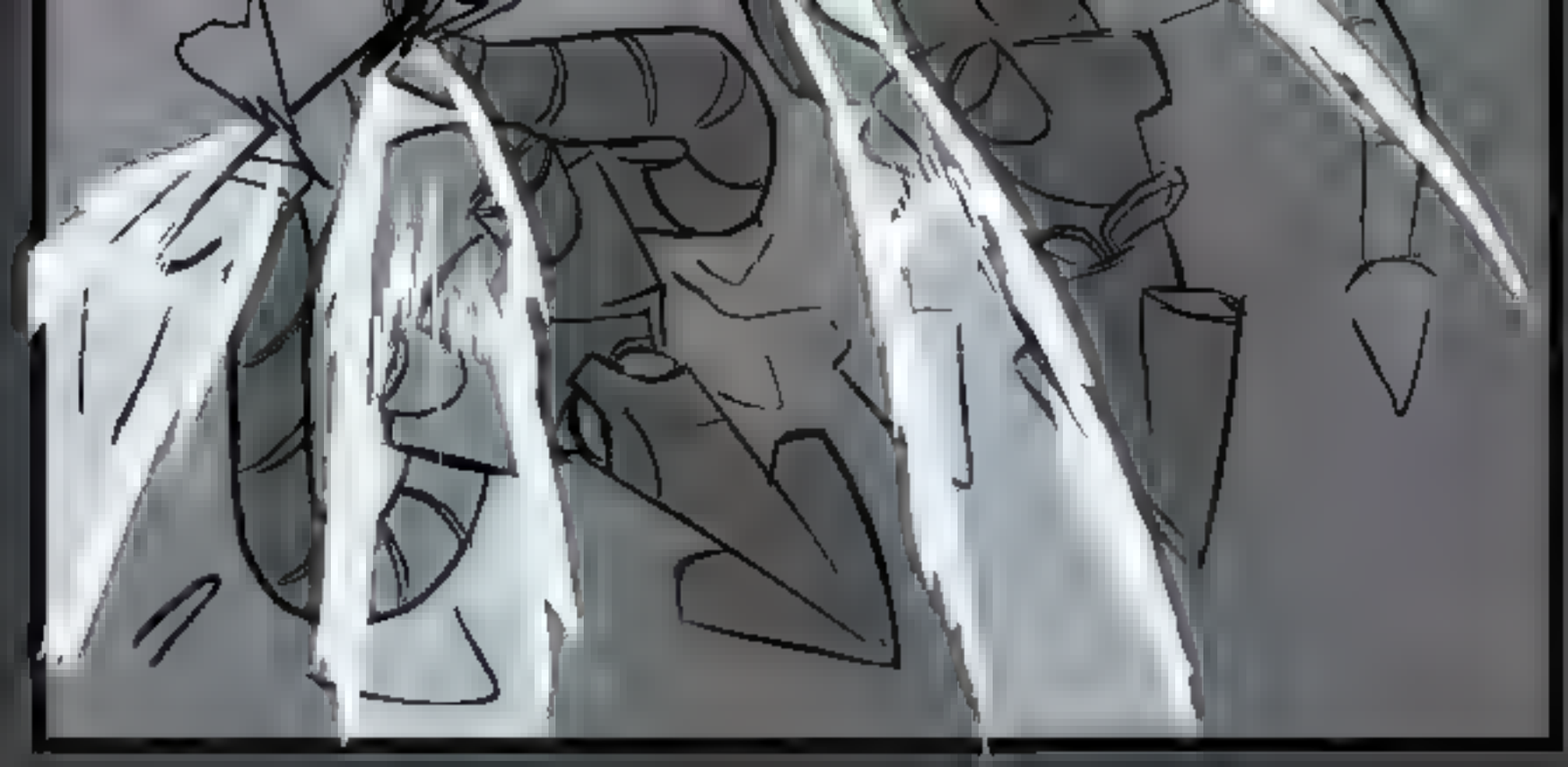
WHERE ARE YOU?

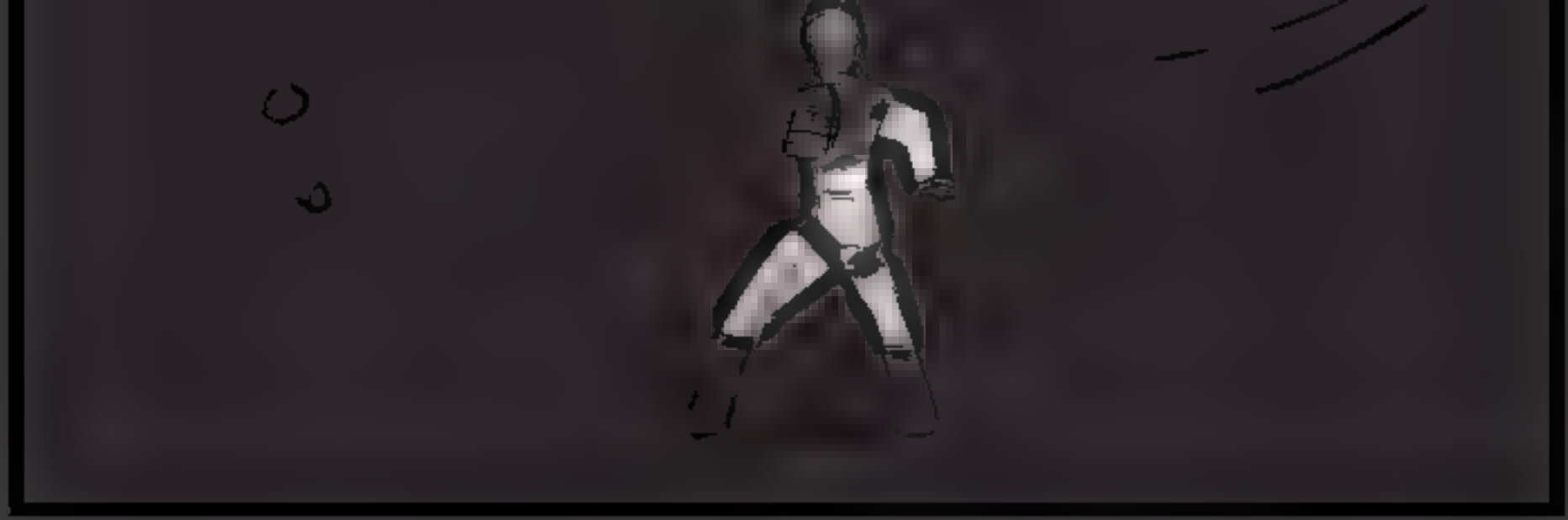
SOME SORT OF BOAT...

SHAKE

SHAKE

TSUNAMI

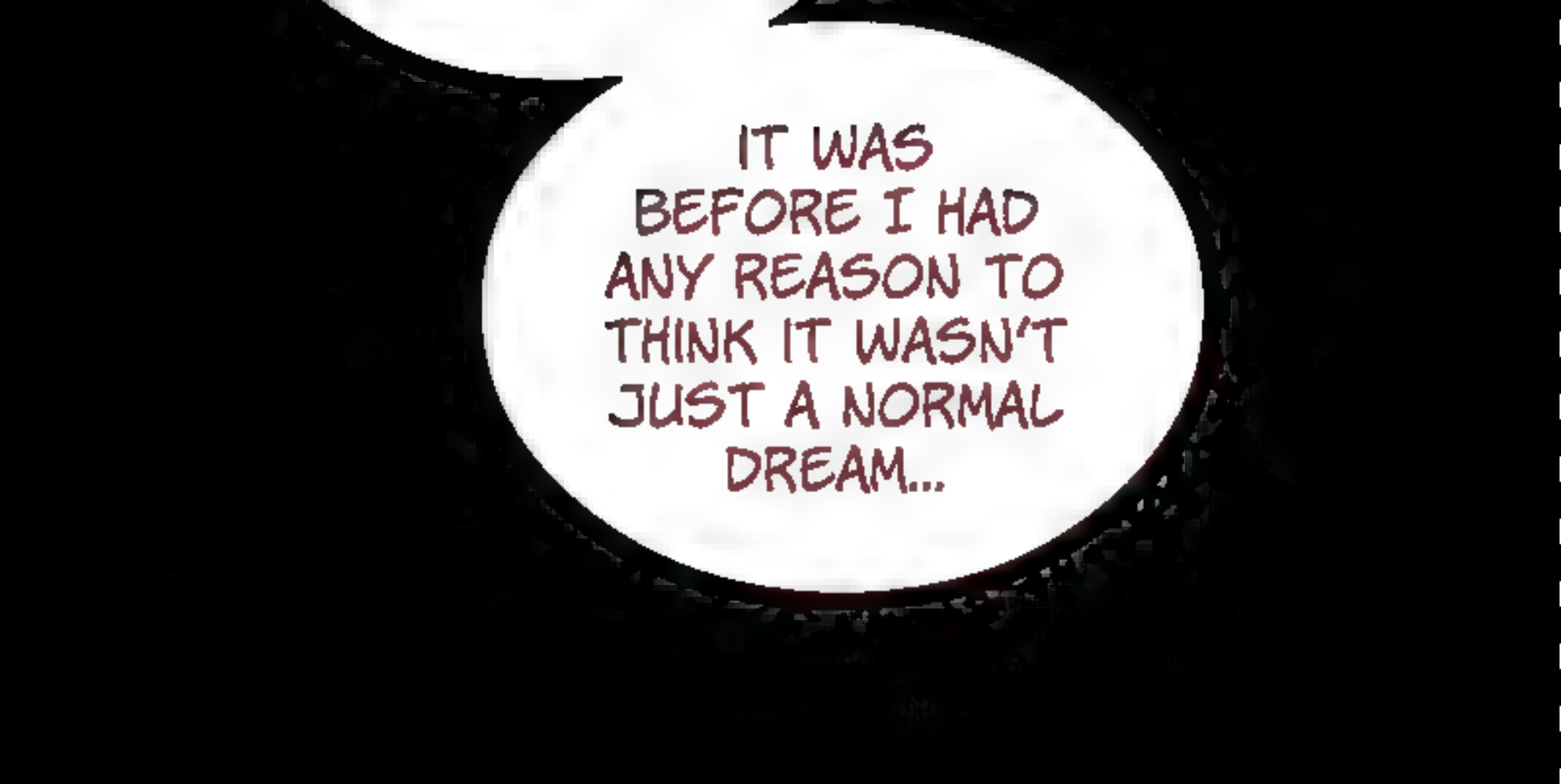


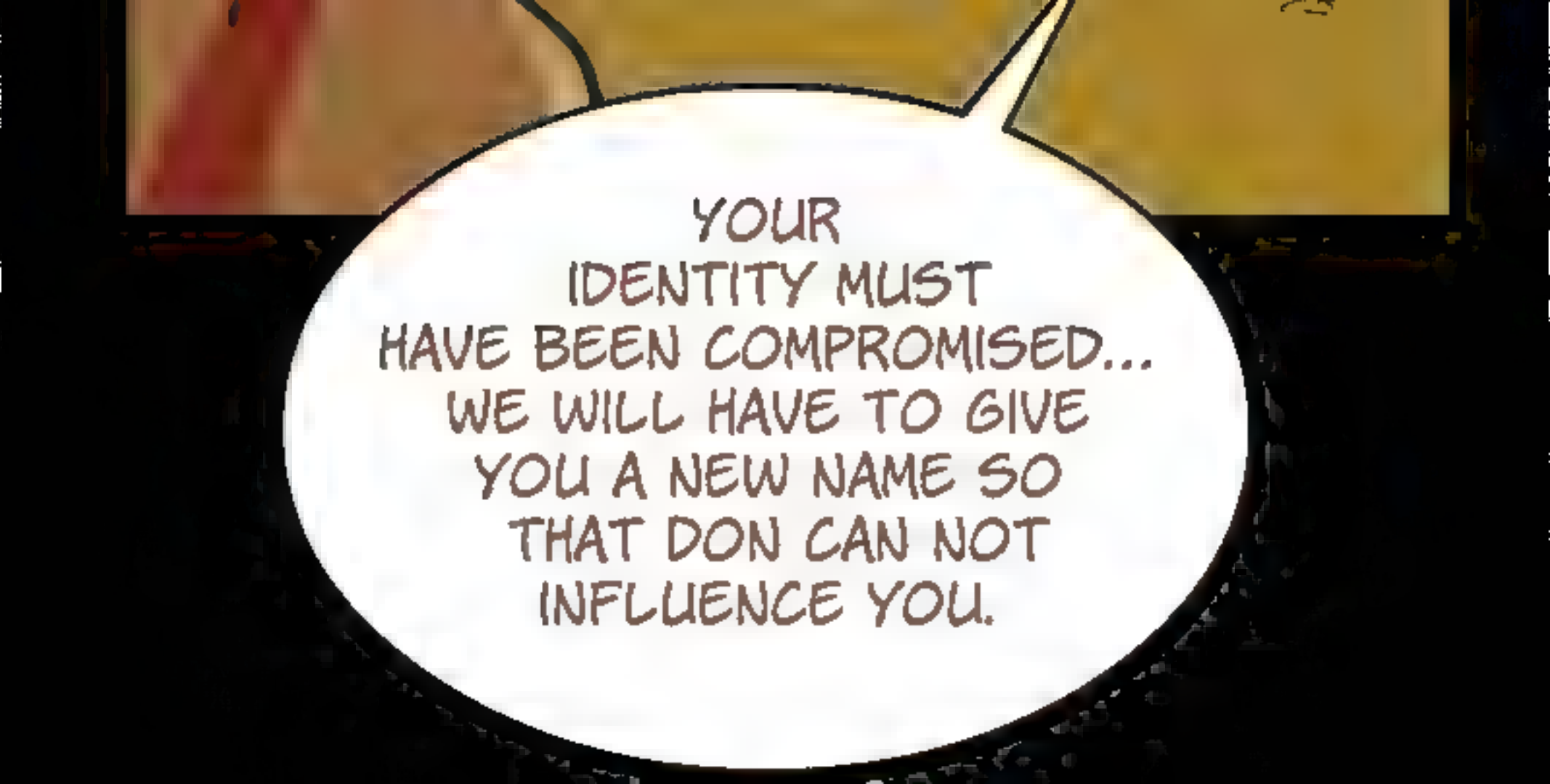


YES,
WE'VE GONE TO
GREAT LENGTHS TO
CONCEAL INFORMATION
FROM DON.

SO,
IN THIS DREAM...
WHAT NAME DID
YOU GIVE?

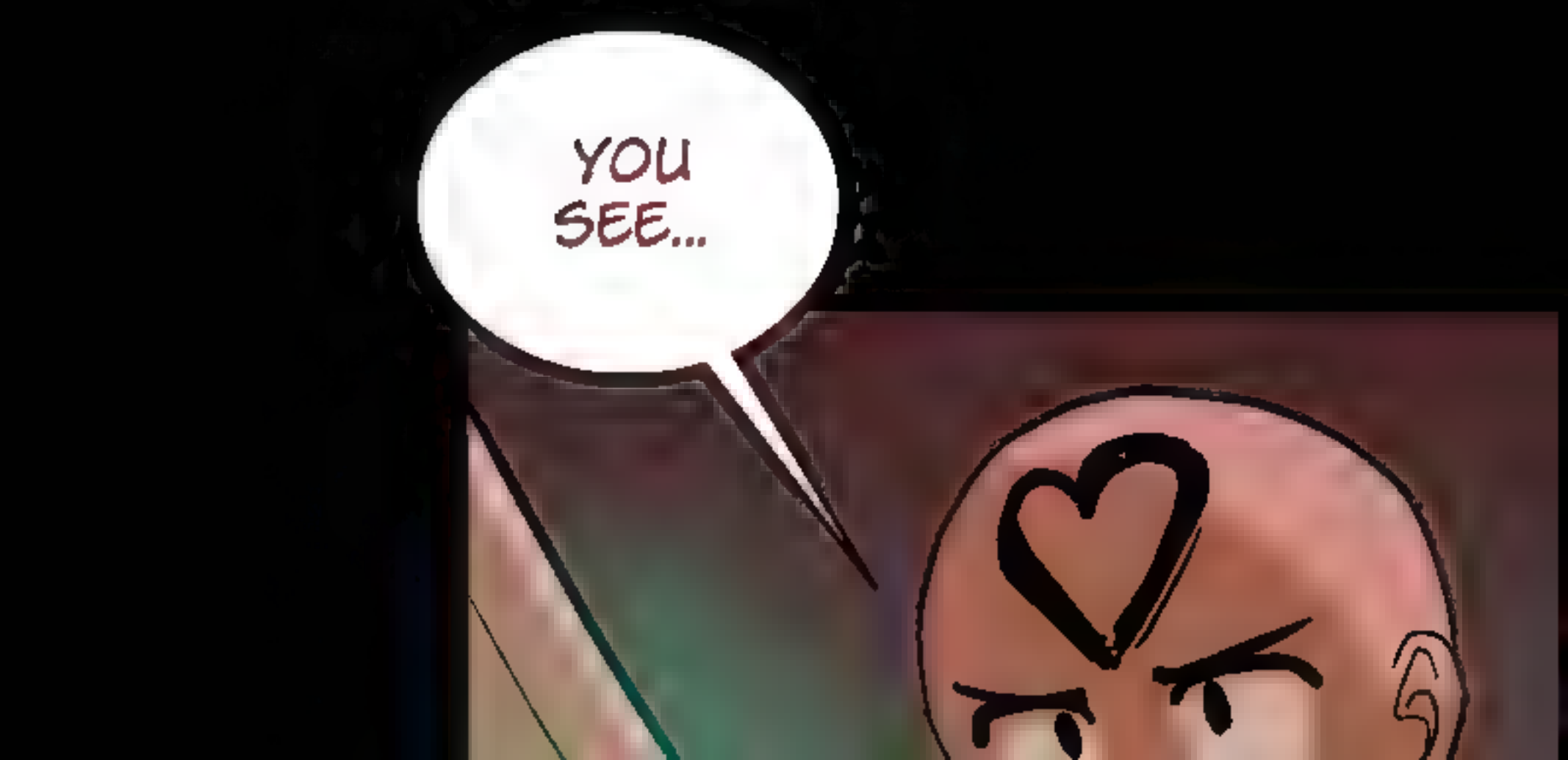
I'M ASHAMED TO SAY THIS, BUT I GAVE HIM THE NAME SERDTSE.


IT WAS BEFORE I HAD ANY REASON TO THINK IT WASN'T JUST A NORMAL DREAM...


YOUR IDENTITY MUST HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED... WE WILL HAVE TO GIVE YOU A NEW NAME SO THAT DON CAN NOT INFLUENCE YOU.

I'M AFRAID IT MAY ALREADY BE TOO LATE.
APPEAR

WOOOSH


YOU
SEE...

JUST LIKE THE OTHER CHANGES I'VE NOTICED...
I THINK THIS SWORD HAS BEEN REPLACED.

ROOM of
SWORDS

UPDATES EVERY MONDAY

COLOR ASSISTANT:
@ONEBAROFSOAP

FOLLOW US!

@ROOMOFSWORDS

DON'T FORGET
TO LEAVE US
A LIKE !!!